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NASA Procedural Requirements

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(NASA Only)

Subject: Management of Government Quality Assurance Functions for NASA Contracts (w/change 1, dated 8/9/2010)

Responsible Office: Office of Safety and Mission Assurance

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CHAPTER 1. Introduction

1.1 Government Contract Quality Assurance Overview

1.1.1 Government contract quality assurance refers to the various functions performed by the Government to determine whether a contractor has fulfilled contract obligations pertaining to quality and quantity. The term quality, when used within the context of this NPR, refers to compliance with any requirement that is contractually levied upon the contractor, including, but not limited to: safety, technical, item configuration, reliability, and quality system requirements.

1.1.2 Government contract quality assurance is provided in addition to, not as a substitute for, contractor responsibilities for assuring delivery of conforming product or services.

1.1.3 NASA may perform Government contract quality assurance functions directly, may delegate these functions to non-NASA Federal agencies, or assign these functions to quality assurance support contractors.

(Note: Final product acceptance, denoted by signature approval, is defined as an inherently Governmental function and may only be performed by Federal Government employees. Support contractors may, however, recommend acceptance of a product or service or act as a liaison for a Material Review Board (MRB) or other similar function.)

1.1.4 Government contract quality assurance functions are planned and conducted on the basis of contract risk, per NPD 8730.5, to achieve confidence levels commensurate with the severity of consequences associated with noncompliance and to mitigate circumstances where there is elevated likelihood of noncompliance.

1.2 Roles and Responsibilities

1.2.1 The Chief, Safety and Mission Assurance, provides policy direction for all NASA quality assurance matters. Included in this role are technical guidance on the type and extent of quality assurance requirements appropriate for NASA acquisitions; functional oversight relative to Contract Administration and Audit Service (CAAS) quality assurance delegations; functional oversight relative to the adequacy of quality assurance personnel staffing and training; and independent assurance of the adequacy of program/project office quality assurance surveillance functions per NPR 8705.6.

1.2.2 The NASA Contract Administration Services and Audit Policy Group (NCASPG) provides oversight and policy determination for Contract Administration Services provided by non-NASA Federal agencies and NASA support contractors. The membership and responsibilities of the NCASPG are provided in NPD 7410.1.

1.2.3 NASA Center Directors are responsible for providing quality assurance services for all projects and programs hosted by, or assigned to, their Center, including the implementation of management controls to ensure proper performance of Government contract quality assurance functions. These responsibilities are typically delegated to the Safety and Mission Assurance (SMA) office (see paragraph 1.2.6 below).

1.2.4 Program and/or project managers are responsible for the quality of their assigned products and services. To that end, they shall:

- a. Plan and budget for implementation of Government contract quality assurance functions ([Requirement 43042](#)).
- b. Identify high-risk and low-risk item acquisitions using input/support provided by the Center SMA office ([Requirement 43043](#)).
- c. Develop Program/Project Quality Assurance Surveillance Plans (PQASP) per Chapter 3 of this NPR using input/support provided by the Center SMA office ([Requirement 43044](#)).
- d. Appoint a program/project SMA Lead, or request SMA Director assignment/provision of a NASA SMA Lead, in accordance with local Center organizational governance procedures ([Requirement 43045](#)).

1.2.5 Contracting officers ensure performance of all necessary actions for effective contracting and safeguard the interests of the United States in its contractual relationships. To implement requirements of this NPR, contracting officers shall:

- a. Make contract awards which ensure that the Government is not assuming unacceptable quality risk, and which take into consideration SMA office input regarding contractor past performance in meeting contract requirements related to safety, quality, and product configuration ([Requirement 43047](#)).
- b. Take inputs from the program/project manager and/or the NASA SMA Lead to establish quality assurance requirements to be delegated to a non-NASA Federal

agency via a Letter of Delegation (LOD) and/or to be performed under contract by a quality assurance support contractor ([Requirement 43048](#)).

c. Incorporate appropriate clauses or provisions into the prime contract that allow NASA, delegated Federal agency personnel, and/or quality assurance support contractors timely access to contractor and subcontractor facilities to perform quality assurance functions required by this NPR ([Requirement 43049 1.1.05.c\(10\)](#)). The circumstances under which Government contract quality assurance is to be performed at source and at subcontractor facilities are described in FAR Sections 46.402 and 46.405, respectively.

1.2.6 NASA Center SMA Directors, as assigned by the Center Director, shall:

a. Implement Government contract quality assurance functions that are performed directly by NASA Center civil service personnel and their delegates and support contractors ([Requirement 43052](#)).

b. Provide support to contracting officers and program/project managers in the:

(1) Selection of acquisition sources that present acceptable quality risk ([Requirement 43054](#)).

(2) Contracting of competent quality assurance support contractors (see NPD 8730.5, paragraph 1.b(10)) ([Requirement 43055](#)).

(3) Selection and assignment of competent civil service quality assurance professionals, including the NASA SMA Lead, when requested by the program/project manager (see NPD 8730.5, paragraph 1.b(10)) ([Requirement 43056](#)).

(4) Development of Government contract quality assurance requirements to be incorporated into PQASPs, quality assurance LODs, or support contracts ([Requirement 43057](#)).

(5) Performance of contractor pre-award surveys, post-award surveys, quality audits, inspections, or other quality assurance functions considered necessary ([Requirement 43058](#)).

1.2.7 The NASA SMA Lead appointed by the program/project manager or the Center SMA Director shall:

a. Identify key processes, products, documents, records, and performance characteristics requiring Government assurance actions and determine the appropriate level and type of Government contract quality assurance actions to be applied ([Requirement 43060](#)).

b. Support the program/project manager and contracting officer in the development of the PQASP, LODs, and/or quality assurance support contracts ([Requirement 43061](#)).

c. Provide detailed information concerning the resource(s) required to perform required quality assurance activities, including preparation of the NASA Center estimate of required delegated agency or surveillance support contract support ([Requirement 43062](#)).

d. Ensure clear and mutual understanding of delegated/assigned quality assurance functions between NASA, the delegated agency, and quality assurance support contractors ([Requirement 43063](#)).

- e. Ensure that delegated/assigned quality assurance functions are properly and effectively performed over the life of the program/project in accordance with the LOD or support contract ([Requirement 43064](#)).
 - f. Continuously evaluate the adequacy of the PQASP, LOD, and/or support contract based on contractor performance and other changing risk factors ([Requirement 43065](#)).
 - g. Coordinate and integrate quality assurance functions performed by different parties to ensure that all of the requirements of Chapter 2 of this NPR are satisfied and to avoid duplication of effort ([Requirement 43066](#)).
- 1.2.8 Non-NASA Federal agencies are delegated authority to perform CAAS on a reimbursable basis as formally agreed to in a LOD.

Note: The Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) and the Naval Research Laboratory are examples of activities that perform delegated CAAS functions.

1.2.9 Quality assurance support contractors perform quality assurance functions on behalf of NASA as tasked under contract.

1.2.10 Third parties are independent organizations that perform specified quality assurance functions on behalf of private industry and Governmental organizations at large. Requirements related to third parties are provided in Chapter 7 of this NPR.

1.2.11 NASA personnel, at all levels, are responsible for reporting to the Office of Inspector General when they become aware of noncompliant conditions or failure experiences which might constitute evidence of possible fraud, malpractice, or other serious misconduct.

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